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## Effects of sport education model on student engagement in middle school physical education

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EFFECTS OF SPORT EDUCATION MODEL ON STUDENT  
ENGAGEMENT IN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education:  
Kinesiology

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by  
Monique Roeshell Nolan

June 2008

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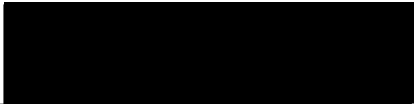
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June 2008

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## ABSTRACT

Physical education is a vital component of the education curriculum. Participation in physical education appears to be a problematic issue for students and teachers. It is important to find out ways to get every student involved in physical education and give them skills that they can use for a lifetime. The purpose of this project was to review the Sport Education Model and its effect on student participation in middle school physical education classes. The method of this project included a review of literature collected by journal articles. This project hypothesized that the Sport Education Model facilitates participation in physical education. The Sport Education Model also provides students with an opportunity to participate, gain skill growth and full immersion in sport culture through increased responsibility, accountability and leadership. Evidence points to the success of the Sport Education curriculum and its efforts in facilitating participation in physical education classes. Sport Education is presented in many physical education classes as an example of how sport can be represented in physical education and how Sport Education enhances growth and development for all students.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the professors in the Kinesiology Department at California State University, San Bernardino for all their help and support in the completion of this project. I would especially like to thank Dr. Hosung So, my first reader, for his support, patience and guidance and Dr. Hyung-Kyoung Oh, my second reader, for her support throughout this process of growth.

The support of my family and friends has been immeasurable. They have made themselves available when at times things seemed unyielding. Thanks are also due to my mother, for her care and love in raising and teaching me to follow my dreams and to not let anything stand in my way. Thank you for teaching me that in everything I do, the sky is the limit.

Finally, I thank God for His special blessings and patience in enabling me to reach this far in my academic pursuit. Through Him, all things are possible. Thank you Father.

## DEDICATION

I am honored to present this project on behalf of my beloved brother Donnie Nolan. Unfortunately, God decided to take him too soon. He would have loved to witness this day. His inspiration and consistent support has pushed me to go after my goals. I am truly blessed to have had the opportunity to make him proud of me. His desire to see me obtain this degree has finally been accomplished. As a result I promise to work very hard and continue to make him proud as I know he is looking down and smiling.

May the Almighty God keep Donnie's soul safe until we meet again in Heaven. My beloved brother, Rest In Peace.  
Your Little Sister, Monique.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The belief of today's physical educator is that all students should have the opportunity to participate in physical education and sport. Contrary to this belief, however students are not given enough time to participate in physical education. The California Education Code (section 51210.1) mandates that students in grades K-8 participate in physical education 200 minutes every 10 school days. Schools are not in compliance with this law and therefore students are receiving limited time in physical education (Troost, 2007). Today, obesity is one of the most pressing health concerns for our students and a vast majority of students are not physically fit (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2004).

Participation in physical education is a key for students' growth and development. Introducing a variety of activities that interest students can inspire them and promote building blocks that foster healthy lifestyles. Through participation, students will develop knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become physically



educated persons. According to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (2004), a physically educated person is defined as a person who has learned skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities, is physically fit and participates regularly in physical activity, knows the benefits of physical activity and values the importance of a healthy lifestyle. To oversee problems in physical education such as participation, there are several curriculum models such as Multi-Activity Model, Fitness Education Model and Sport Education Model (SEM) that students can benefit from. The SEM is one of the popular models used today in physical education to engage students in activities and encourage participation (Siedentop, 1994).

Physical Education offers a broad range of benefits for students, including the prevention of obesity, character building, self confidence, and an overall sense of the whole body. Physical education classrooms can set the stage for how students view physical fitness and health. Physical education classes are also great for introducing basic nutritional concepts and a solid foundation for understanding the whole body, health, and life long physical activities. Unfortunately, there is a

de-emphasis on physical education in schools. Physical education is as much a part of the education curriculum as English, math, and social studies. Students benefit greatly from physical education and are given the opportunity to develop critical life skills such as team work, problem solving, and self-discipline (National association for Sport and Physical Education, 2004).

Unfortunately, few students are experiencing the benefits of physical education. Physical education should be an enjoyable, fun and stimulating experience for all students. Providing students with this type of experience lies in the hands of schools and administrators who run them. Our future generations are at risk for being physically unfit and physical education needs to be restored and given a place of importance in our school system. The SEM has been used by many physical educators and it has been reported as an effective model for students (Hastie, 1998a).

Students in middle school should develop their motor skills throughout their educational experience (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2004). Physical education develops not only good health, but also emotional, psychological and social elements of the whole

body. This is why the middle school setting was chosen as a focus of participation in physical education.

#### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this study was to review the effectiveness of the SEM on student participation in middle school physical education classes.

#### Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that the SEM facilitates participation in physical education. The SEM provides students with opportunity, skill growth and full immersion in sport culture through increased responsibility, accountability and leadership.

#### Scope of the Project

This project was intended for middle school physical education. Therefore, journals that focused on elementary, high school, and college physical education were excluded. Information was gathered from five scholarly journals such as *Journal of Physical Education Recreation & Dance*, *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Journal of Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, *British Journal of*

*Teaching Physical Education, Journal of Teaching in Physical Education* and three textbooks.

The Middle school setting was chosen primarily because physical education is a critical school curriculum and also physical education is required for all students in middle school; whereas high school only requires students to take a minimal of two years of physical education. Physical education in middle school focuses on multiple aspects of the mind and body, such as cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Physical education at the middle school level also prepares students to meet the physical demands of every day life through a wide range of activities. The transition from childhood to young adulthood becomes complex at the middle school level. Students are independent, self-directed and eagerly seeking new challenges. The SEM is suitable for middle school students, because it provides students with the opportunity to explore new ideas through sport and take ownership and responsibility for their learning.

#### Limitations of the Project

Limitations of this study were that the focus was primarily on middle school students. It excluded

elementary, high school and college students. Other limitations included the scope of scholarly journals. Only five scholarly journals and three textbooks were selected and included for this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### Data Sources

Research was conducted on the Internet utilizing search engines (i.e., EBSCOhost, SportDiscus, etc.) with the parameter of the SEM. Scholarly journals were searched and reviewed by library keyword search at California State University, San Bernardino library.

#### Inclusion Criteria

After reviewing journals specifically dealing with SEM, the main focus was on the effectiveness of the SEM and how it facilitates participation. Scholarly journals used for this project included *Journal of Physical Education Recreation & Dance*, *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Journal of Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, and *British Journal of Teaching Physical Education*. The California Education Codes, National Standards for Physical Education and three textbooks were also used. Three textbooks, titled, *The Curriculum Process in Physical Education* (Jewett, Bain & Ennis, 1995), *Sport Education: Quality PE through Positive Sport Experiences* (Siedentop,

1994) and *Complete Guide to Sport Education* were all key sources for gathering information for this project. Some of the important factors that constantly appeared in the journals were fair play, leadership, attitudes and participation for all. Among the five journals, ten articles were photocopied and compiled for review purpose.

## CHAPTER THREE

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### History of Sport Education Model

According to Wallhead and O'Sullivan (2005), Daryl Siedentop is one of the principle developers of the SEM. Siedentop's interest in sport education (SE) emerged from his involvement in teacher effectiveness research and physical education in relation to play (Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005). In 1982, Siedentop voiced his beliefs about SE at the Commonwealth Games Conference in Brisban, Australia (Jewett et al., 1995). The SEM became very popular and was considered an integral part of physical education programs in Australia and New Zealand (Jewett et al., 1995). The Australian Sport Commission used the concept of sport education and focused on two primary goals: (1) to increase sport participation and (2) to enhance children's attitude toward sport and sport participation (Jewett et al., 1995). The interest in SE quickly spread to the United States amongst physical educators which initially lead many to further research more about the SEM curriculum.



Siedentop (1998) described the SEM as "a curriculum and instruction model designed to provide authentic, educationally rich sport experiences for girls and boys in the context of school physical education"(p.18). The SEM has three primary goals: to help students become competent, literate, and enthusiastic sportspersons (Mohr, Townsend & Bulger, 2001). Siedentop (1994) believed that the SEM could educate students to be players and provide positive sport culture. A competent sportsperson was defined as having sufficient skills to participate in games, understand and execute strategies appropriate to the complexity of play, and knowledgeable game players. A literate sportsperson was defined as someone who understands the values and rituals associated with sport and can distinguish between good and bad sport practices. Lastly, an enthusiastic sportsperson was defined as, someone who participates and behaves in ways that preserve, protect and enhance the sport climate, whether it is a local youth sport culture or a national sport culture (Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005).

Along with the goals of the SEM, Siedentop also emphasized that students should develop specific characteristics of the specific sport such as: motor

skills, fitness specific skills, and decision making skills (Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005). The same study on student perceptions of skill improvement provided evidence that the SEM facilitates motor skill development. Literature on SEM by Mohr and colleagues (2001) indicates that the curriculum model can have a number of benefits for both students and teachers.

The benefits for students who participate in sport education included an increased investment in physical education, enhanced opportunities for potentially marginalized students, and higher levels of student learning (Hastie, 1998a). Students become more literate about the sport that they are playing through multiple roles that they exhibit during a sport season such as refereeing and scorekeeping. For teachers, SEM provides opportunities to focus on student behaviors and freedom from direct instruction (Hastie, 1998a). Freedom from direct instruction allows students to take on more teacher responsibilities (e.g. roll call, warm-up, captain and coach) and allows the teacher to assist with individual students.

The role of the teacher in the SEM is to teach appropriate skills and knowledge about the specific sport

to all students. The teacher is responsible for instructional experiences that should increase student skill levels and assist them to become successful in the classroom (Jewett et al., 1995). The SEM benefits both student and teacher in multiple ways, but overall the benefits interact to produce a positive learning environment that is challenging, supportive, and fun (Mohr et al. 2001).

#### Characteristics of Sport Education Model

The SEM has six distinct characteristics that are essential to engaging students in the culture of the sport. One of the primary functions of SE is to make physical education look more like a sport (Siedentop, 1994). Sports include a pre-season, season, competition, and a culminating event. Siedentop (1994) identifies a sport season as an extended time period that allows students to develop skills and understandings associated with progressive challenging activities.

The second characteristic is team affiliation. Team affiliation allows students to become members of a team for the duration of the season. Students assume roles as coaches, players, managers, statisticians and so on. Team

affiliation is and can be conducive to student engagement and gives them a sense of belonging.

Third, formal competition is tied into the sport season, which allows students to demonstrate skills and strategies. Players look forward to this part of the sport season even though the nature of the competitive experience is regulated according to their developmental levels and teacher intended educational outcomes. Students enjoy being on a team, experiencing the benefit of membership and therefore they demonstrate greater levels of enthusiasm, effort and enjoyment (Kinchin, Penney & Clarke, 2001).

A fourth characteristic, the culminating event provides motivation and focus for players to further extend their abilities or skill levels and generate greater enthusiasm. A culminating event can be a tournament or league. Teachers must regulate tournament format so that all students participate and experience success.

A fifth characteristic, record keeping provides feedback and motivation for individuals and teams. Record keeping may reward skilled players and encourage low or averaged ability players for their team contributions. Record keeping also sends a message to players about the

importance of the event and gives them a sense of membership.

Finally, the sixth characteristic of SEM is festivity. Festivity adds a social element and recognizes students for their participation. Team photos, uniforms, and traditions of the particular sport may take place. According to Kirk (2004), through the six characteristics, Siedentop argues that all students are equally involved. All students get the same opportunity to learn and have multiple roles throughout a sport season. The SEM provides equal opportunity for both boys and girls to practice skills and become skillful players (Hastie, 1998b).

#### Designing a Sport Education Season

Designing a SE season can be overwhelming for many teachers, but planning guidelines have been developed to enhance the effectiveness of the season design process. The first step is to select a sport. Performance activities, such as gymnastics, dance, and fitness activities, such as weight training can also be incorporated in the SE curriculum (Hastie & Kinchin. 2004). Activities in SEM are modified so that all students are required to be involved. It is during this part of planning that teachers need to determine what modification

will be used (Hastie & Kinchin, 2004). Step two involves class size. SEM is a curriculum model that can function with both small and large class sizes. Once class size has been determined it is imperative that experience, skill level and gender be considered. Steps three, four and five consist of team details, roles and equipment. Step six and seven are the planning of season and competition format. Teachers need to allocate some time in their complete season for a type of culminating event. It should consist of a one-day format that involves all teams competing against one another. Also during this time, presentation of awards should be included. This is a special part of the SE season. Students look forward to this day and much benefit from how well they and their team performed (Hastie & Kinchin, 2004).

#### Implementation of Sport Education Model

Siedentop (1998) argues that SE is best achieved through peer teaching, cooperative learning and effective instruction. He also argues that SE was not a simulation of sport, but entailed three distinct characteristics that separated it from institutionalized sport: participation requirements, developmentally appropriate competition, and diverse roles (Siedentop, 1998). Students exhibit

different roles in a SE season besides being a player, non playing roles such as coach, manager, statistician, etc., guarantees that all students are involved at all times and all students play equally and have equal opportunity to learn all positions (Siedentop, 1998). Students are in position to shape their own learning experiences and develop skills in leadership and evaluation. Students are encouraged to make decisions with limited input from the teacher. The SEM calls for students to be grouped in similar levels of ability and fair play and effort is encouraged (Siedentop, 1998). Kinchin et al (2001) has revealed that students are more comfortable in smaller groups rather than larger groups and that they benefit from learning from one another. As students are given multiple roles during a season in SEM, they become more responsible for their own sport experience and the managerial roles of the teacher diminish (Siedentop, 1998). Peer teaching becomes a vital part of the learning experience for students in SE. Students have positively responded to peer teaching and they benefit from learning from one another and teachers value the outcomes that are produced (Siedentop, 1998).

At the secondary level (middle school), SEM offers an alternative approach to traditional physical education curriculums. Physical education is offered in a way that provides an experience that is more complete and authentic (Jones & Ward, 1998). As a result students experience a more meaningful physical education experience through sport. At the secondary level, SE still encompasses some of the same characteristics as a traditional physical education curriculum, but students experience longer seasons and are placed in teams immediately for practice and competition (Jones & Ward, 1998). Students are given clear and concise instruction. Communication between the teacher and student is emphasized more. Students must learn to communicate with their teacher as they share ideas and concerns with him/her. The teacher must be able to listen to suggestions and decide if they are beneficial for the growth of the students before implementing them in the curriculum.

#### Related Research on Sport Education Model

One aspect that can influence learning in physical education is students' attitude. However, there are many factors that can contribute to positive attitudes in physical education. Students seek learning environments



that are comfortable, confident and student friendly. "The creation of a positive learning environment impacts both student attitudes and student learning" (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007, p. 602). Attitudes are particularly important in middle school physical education classes. Evidence suggests that students who exhibit a positive attitude towards physical activity in physical education are more likely to participate in physical activities outside of school. Participation in physical education can help students maintain an active lifestyle outside of school and help students develop positive attitudes now and in the future (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007). Subramaniam and Silverman (2007) also revealed that people's attitudes have been found as a key influence in participation in physical activity.

In addition, programs such as Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARKS), Middle School Physical Activity and Nutrition (M-SPAN), and Child and Adolescent Trail for Cardiovascular Health (CATCH) have been used as intervention programs designed to impact students' attitudes toward physical activity and participation at the secondary level. These programs have been implemented through lessons and or activities to help students engage

positively in class. Different attitudes towards physical education and physical activity may be attributed to previous experience, gender, skill level, grade level, ethnicity and disability (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007).

Findings in a study conducted by Subramaniam & Silverman (2007) suggested that students in middle school possessed moderately positive attitudes towards physical education. Grade level was also a major factor in this study. Also revealed in the study was a decline in student's attitude towards physical activity as they increased in grade level. The explanation for the decline in student's attitude and interest stems from boredom and repetition of the same activities each year (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007).

Performing the same sports or activities can contribute to lack of interest and negative attitudes in physical education. However the SEM allows students at the middle school level an opportunity to learn different roles in a sport season and time to master skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to fully engage in physical education. A study done by Hastie (1998b) on the participation and perception of girls within a SE unit revealed that girls

felt more involved in activities due to the fact that they got to take on more roles outside of the player role.

The SEM motivates and challenges students in ways that benefit them and promote life long activity and enjoyment. Enjoyment plays a major role in increasing participation, physical activity and positive attitude (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007). According to Hastie (1998b) students revealed that they enjoyed SE because they felt that they were given more time to learn the skills necessary to play and they enjoyed the competitive aspect of each SE unit.

Teachers need to find ways to capture interest, which can lead to enhanced participation and enjoyment. The SEM fits middle school students' needs and gives students power over their own learning and experiences. Physical education should be meaningful and students should be full active participants in the process of growth (Subramaniam & Silverman, 2007). Educators can have a profound influence on students' attitudes by creating an environment that is enjoyable, challenging and conducive to all students' learning.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

After completing the review of literature, this study focused on the effectiveness of the SEM and how it engages students to participate in middle school physical education. Many characteristics of the SEM help create a positive, enjoyable learning experience for all students involved.

According to Siedentop (1994) SEM should educate students to be players and develop into competent, literate and enthusiastic sportspeople. The SEM also offers an alternative approach to a traditional physical education curriculum.

As found by Subramaniam and Silverman's (2007) study, the SEM facilitates students' participation in physical education. The SEM has shown to motivate students to participate and enabled them to fulfill sport related roles, such as refereeing and coaching. There is a great deal of research on the SEM and the impact that it has on students and teachers who experience it during PE. More recent research on SEM conducted by Siedentop, Hastie and Mars (2004) indicated that students who participated in the

SEM spent more time talking about physical education and their experiences outside of class. Students favored a SE curriculum over a traditional curriculum during their physical education experience. Students displayed improved attitudes towards sport and physical activity as a result of their SE experiences. Students in middle school expressed a preference for SE units over their previous PE experience (Hastie, 1998b). Some of the major reasons for SEM over other curriculum models were that it is more fun and students felt that they got to play more often (Hastie, 1998b).

According to Siedentop and his colleagues (2004), the SEM increased both students' participation and overall involvement in non-playing roles, such as statisticians, managers and peer mentors increased. The benefits and opportunities that are presented to students during a SE curriculum are unlimited. The SEM in middle school setting has provided students with the opportunity to grow and develop as sport persons. Students are allowed to explore new ideas throughout a sport season and develop knowledge, skills, social interaction skills and team identities.

Students are given the opportunity to take ownership and responsibility for their learning. As a result,

students are challenged through peer support and are praised and valued for their contributions to their team and sport season. The development of SEM is continually growing due to the proclaimed founder Daryl Siedentop, his colleagues and their aim at understanding effective teaching in physical education.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to review the effectiveness of the SEM on student participation in middle school physical education classes. The SEM is based on sport for all students. Within this model students are taught to be performers and sportspersons. Each student knows the rules, rituals and scoring procedures for specific sports that he or she plays. When appropriately designed and implemented, the SEM can provide sport experiences and facilitate participation for all students. The emphasis on physical education as a life-long process is an ongoing concern for our society. The SEM provides a foundation for students' ongoing involvement in sports.

The primary goal of a physical educator should be focused on helping students develop a commitment to lifelong physical activity. Physical activity and sport can be highly valued by adolescents, but the way it has been delivered in traditional physical education classes has raised questions as to whether there are opportunities for students to develop, grow and succeed. The SEM provides students, especially students in middle school

with the opportunity to take on new challenges and the characteristics of a SE season (practice, competition, culminating events and festivities) is exciting and rewarding for all players involved. Students' effort, enthusiasm and team contributions are praised and given much attention from peers and teachers. As found, the SEM was very effective in providing students with opportunity, skill growth and full immersion in sport culture through increased responsibility, accountability and leadership.

Physical education is an indispensable curriculum in education. Incorporating curriculum models such as Sport Education in our schools will help students develop character, self-discipline, responsibility and leadership. The SEM enables students to have a life filled with great sport activities and experiences that will lead them to live a physically active lifestyle.



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